**Shunning NC**

I negate. The resolution says “ought not,”, and “ought” implies moral obligation, so the affirmative burden is to prove there is a moral prohibition on economic sanctions. Otherwise, there would be no normative requirement against using them. Thus, if sanctions are permissible, you negate. Morality requires that we act to support the moral order, and actively define the boundaries of the moral community. Morality can only be functional if its enforcement is a key imperative, or it will no longer have binding power and lose value as an ethical system. Eric Beversluis[[1]](#footnote-1) writes,

We find the answer when we note that **there is a**nother **“level” of moral duties**. When Galtung speaks of “reinforcing…morality,” he has identified a duty **that goes beyond specific acts of respecting people’s rights**. The argument goes like this: **There is more involved in respecting the rights of others than not violating them by one’s actions.** For **if there is such a thing as a moral order, which unites people in a moral community,** then surely **one has a duty** (at least *prima facie*) not only to avoid violating the rights of others with one’s actions but also **to support that** moral **order.** Consider that **the moral order itself contributes significantly to** people’s **rights being respected**. It does so **by encouraging and reinforcing moral behavior and** by **discouraging and sanctioning immoral behavior. In this moral community people mutually reinforce each other’s moral behavior and thus raise the overall level of morality. Were this moral order to disintegrate, were people to stop reinforcing each other’s moral behavior, there would be much more violation of** people’s **rights.** Thus **to the extent that behavior affects the moral order, it indirectly affects people’s rights.** And this is where shunning fits in.

Thus, the criterion is **promoting the moral order**, meaning using the power of members of the community to reinforce mutually accepted behavior and reject unfavorable action. I contend that shunning despotic regimes through economic sanctions is necessary to uphold the moral order. Beversluis 2 writes,

**Certain types of behavior constitute a direct attack on the moral order. When the violation of human rights is flagrant, willful, and persistent, the offender is,** as it were, **thumbing her nose at the moral order publicly rejecting it as binding her behavior.** Clearly **such behavior, if tolerated** by society, **will weaken and perhaps eventually undermine altogether the moral order.** Let us look briefly at those three conditions which turn immoral behavior into an attack on the moral order. An immoral action is flagrant if it is “extremely or deliberately conspicuous; notorious, shocking.” Etymologically the word means “burning” or “blazing.” The definition of shunning implies therefore that those offenses require shunning which are shameless or indiscreet, which the person makes no effort to hide and no good-faith effort to excuse. Such actions “blaze forth” as an attack on the moral order. But to merit shunning the action must also be willful and persistent. We do not consider the actions of the “backslider,” the weak-willed, the one-time offender to be challenges to the moral order. It is the repeat offender, the unrepentant sinner, the cold-blooded violator of morality whose behavior demands that others publicly reaffirm the moral order. When someone flagrantly, willfully, and repeatedly violates the moral order, those who believe in the moral order, **the members of the moral community, must respond in a way that reaffirms the legitimacy of that moral order.** How does shunning do this? **First, by refusing publicly to have to do with such a person one announces support for the moral order and backs up the announcement with action. This action reinforces the commitment to the moral order both of the shunner and of the other members of the community.** (Secretary of State Schultz in effect made this argument in his call for international sanctions on Libya in the early days of 1986.) Further, **[Second], shunning may have a *moral* effect on the shunned person, even if the direct impact is not adequate to change the immoral behavior.** If the shunned person thinks of herself as part of the moral community, **shunning may** well **make clear to her that she is**, in fact, **removing herself from that community by the behavior is question. Thus shunning may achieve by moral suasion what cannot be achieved by “force.”** Finally, **[Third], shunning may be a form of punishment, of moral sanction, whose appropriateness depends not on whether it will change the person’s behavior, but on whether he *deserves* the punishment for violating the moral order. Punishment** then **can be** viewed as **a way of maintaining the moral order, of “purifying the community”** after it has been made “unclean,” as ancient communities might have put it.

Sanctions are morally obligatory because they are the best way to shun despotic regimes. First, without economic sanctions, shunning is incomplete because one of the most important dimensions of relations between nation-states, trade, remains normalized, so the act of shunning is a hollow statement rather than morally forceful. Second, imposing sanctions is the only way to prevent a nation from financially benefitting from the actions of abusive regimes. Shunning is insincere and ineffective if, in reality, the shunner is aiding and profiting from oppressive rulers. Even if there are other or better ways to shun, economic sanctions are at least morally permissible because they are imposed with the legitimate moral goal of promoting the moral order. Thus, I negate.

1. Eric Beversluis [Professor of philosophy at Western Michigan University]. “On Shunning Undesirable Regimes: Ethics and Economic Sanctions.” Public Affairs Quarterly. Volume 3, Number 2, April, 1989. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)